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ABSTRACT

Information is given in this booklet on how to implement a language experience approach to reading readiness instruction in the kindergarten based on the experiences of teachers in the Burrillville Reading Observes Necessary Communication Objectives and Skills (BRONCOS) project, a Right to Read program in Burrillville, Rhode Island. An introduction explains the title (one child's story of a nightmare), an overview gives reasons for using the language experience approach based on utilizing the child's oral language as a bridge to reading, a chart lists skills that can be taught in such a program, and step-by-step directions for language experience activities involving a three-day cycle are explained. Instructions are given for making children's individual experience booklets. Stimuli for language experience stories are suggested and several pages of language experience lessons covering several content areas are presented. (MKM)

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A PEAR TRIED TO KISS ME

A LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH TO READING READINESS IN KINDERGARTEN

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Introduction

Mrs. Marilyn Johnson, a kindergarten teacher at Sweeney School, had just finished reading *The Nightmare in My Closet* by Mercer Mayer (The Dial Press, New York 1968) to her class of five-year olds. It's a story about a boy who resists going to sleep because he imagines that a monster is living in his bedroom closet.

As part of the kindergarten emphasis on helping children to deal openly with their fears, she had the children draw pictures of their own nightmare. Then she moved from child to child and asked each one to describe their nightmare, writing each child's sentence below the picture. Some of the sentences were highly predictable:

"A monster took Kerry and me to his cave."

Some were not!

"A witch Christmas tree tried to chop my head off."

"Dracula came to eat my grandfather."

Sherry's response, however, was totally unexpected:

"A Pear Tried To Kiss Me"

As Mrs. Johnson wrote these words below Sherry's picture, she marveled once again at young children's rich imagination and their ability to use their mother tongue. It was just another reason why a language experience approach to reading readiness seemed to make so much sense.

This booklet is a description of the program developed by Mrs. Johnson and Miss Cook, Sweeney School kindergarten teachers. They will tell you why they decided to use language experience and explain how you can use it in your own kindergarten. Step by step directions will be provided though we are certain you will want to adapt the method to your own situation.

William J. Oehlkers, Consultant
BRONCOS Reading Improvement Program

Why Language Experience?

First, we have watched children walk into kindergarten year after year with a great deal of oral language. We thought we should take advantage of that wealth and use it as the base for the entire readiness program. In these days of making the most of all our resources, we could ill afford to neglect what mothers (and fathers) had been nurturing for the past five years—the native tongue.

Second, we felt that we could incorporate all the traditional readiness skills into a language experience approach. For example, children are usually taught about left to right progression and return sweep. This can be learned quite naturally in language experience as children watch us writing down their words and move our hands from left to right in the re-reading exercises.

Third, we felt that language experience could be used with other areas of the curriculum such as social studies, science, art, music and arithmetic. In one lesson, for example, children were shown a science experiment in which mothballs rose and fell in a jar of carbonated water. The bubbles of gas clung to the mothballs and gave them a "lift" up, then dissolved upon surfacing, and the mothballs dropped again. The children dictated their observations to the teacher. The content could change from science one day to art the next, but the same oral language and dictation techniques could be employed each time.

Then too, we know that five-year olds come in all sizes, not just physically, but in their readiness for reading. Each year a few of our children have acquired a sizeable sight vocabulary by the end of the year. Others who were less mature sat in the group and picked up many important readiness concepts such as reading as "talk written down", left to right progression, and the concept of "word".

Finally, the program could be run inexpensively; the basic materials are a felt marker, large chart paper and a gaggle of lively five-year olds.

How To Do Language Experience – An Overview

As the basic components of a total reading readiness program, we chose the skills and concepts explained in the following chart.

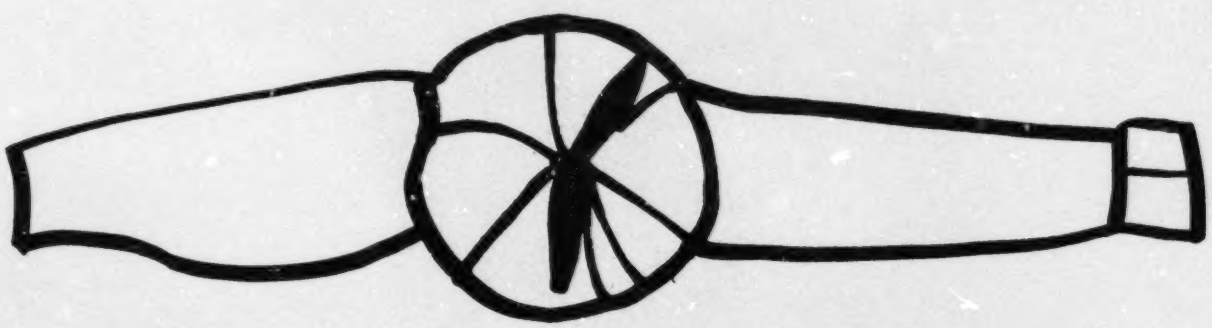
Skill Area	Explanation
Left to Right	Knowing that print in our culture is read left to right
Auditory Discrimination	Distinguishing between sounds of language
Visual Discrimination	Distinguishing between printed letters and words
Auditory Memory	Remembering what is heard
Visual Memory	Remembering what is seen
Sequencing	Remembering the order of events
Alphabet Knowledge	Knowing the letters of the alphabet
Categorization	Grouping according to characteristics
Phonics	Letter-sound associations
Listening	Attending to speech, following directions given orally
Speaking	Verbal expression
Creative Dramatics	Acting out — with and without words
Vocabulary Development	Acquiring labels for ideas
Literature	Acquaintance with good books
Comprehension	Understanding
Content Area	Social Studies, Science, Math, Art, Music, Health, etc.

Just how did we use language experience to develop a total readiness program? We can illustrate the procedures by referring to a lesson in one of our classes which was initiated by the children themselves. After this illustration, we will walk through the procedures again, providing specific step by step directions.

One morning a child noticed that Mrs. Johnson was wearing a new watch. One after another, children gathered around, asking questions about the watch until the whole class had joined the group. The children were intrigued by the watch because it was different from any they had seen before. The colors on the face changed with the passage of time.

Setting aside the regular lesson, she had the children sit on the carpet and then gave each child a chance to examine the watch more closely. The children and teacher talked about it for some time. Finally, she asked the children to dictate about the experience. This is what they said:

"Mrs Johnson has a watch with colors on it," said the children. "the band is black," said Becky. "The colors keep changing," said Rebecca. Bobby said, "It is ticking."



Mrs. Johnson read the story with the class and let them underline words they recognized. This session ended with a game in which the children matched colors and the color words.

A sample of our reading readiness skills chart is given on the next page. Review the chart with us and observe the skills that have been dealt with during this particular activity.

Stimulus: Teacher's Watch		
Left to Right	√	
Auditory Discrimination	√	Listened to tick of watch
Visual Discrimination	√	
Auditory Memory	√	
Visual Memory	√	When drawing watch, students had to remember different colors
Sequencing	√	
Alphabet Knowledge		
Categorization	√	Color names, categorizing clocks
Phonics		
Listening	√	
Speaking	√	
Creative Dramatics		
Vocabulary Development	√	Words dealing with time, clocks
Literature		
Comprehension	√	
Content Area	√	Math — the concept of time

Comments: Children became interested in time. We had a simple lesson and made clock faces with paper plates. A clock puzzle that previously had seen little use became very popular.

In filling out the chart Mrs. Johnson checked *Left to Right* because the students had a chance to follow along as the teacher read the story to them. She checked *Auditory Discrimination* because the children had been asked to listen to one another in the discussion circle (others might label this as listening comprehension). They also listened to the ticking of the watch. Because the children were expected to recall the story after it had been repeated a few times, the *Auditory Memory* column was marked as well. She checked *Visual Discrimination* and *Visual Memory* as the children had an opportunity to distinguish between words and try to remember the names of the words.

The color name game allowed her to mark the *Categorization* column as the children grouped the colors under several labels. Also included in the categorization activity was the children's listing of things that measured time. She also checked *Sequencing* as the class had an opportunity to recall the order of the events in the dictated account. Since many words had been introduced about clocks and time in the oral discussion, the *New Vocabulary* column was checked off. Listening and Speaking were noted in the skills sheet as those activities that comprised the first half of the lesson. *Comprehension* involved the interpretation of the morning's activity.

Later in the week, clock faces were made out of paper plates and the concept of time was further developed.

The chart is a reminder of the many skills which we would like to teach the children. Through the language experience approach, *Listening* and *Speaking* are likely to occur in the natural course of events. In other cases such as *Categorization*, the teacher needs to think of appropriate concepts for the lesson. With a little imagination it is fairly easy to think of ideas related to the initial stimulus.

Of course, the watch story did not end on that day. Later in the week it was reviewed with the children; each child received a duplicated copy and drew a picture of the watch. The details for the follow-up procedures are described in the section.

The children's watch story remained one of their favorites throughout the year. It was read over and over again.

Of course, even much more could be done with a story such as this. It would have been very appropriate to read the nursery rhyme *Hickory, Dickory, Dock*. We might have done some creative dramatics involving situations in which time affects our daily lives. We have found, however, that it is not possible, given the time constraints and other curriculum demands, to do everything. We do try to see that a number of skills or processes are touched upon in every lesson cycle; over the course of weeks, we deal with every skill on the chart.

Step By Step Directions for Language Experience Activities

Now that we have given you an overview of this approach, we would like to spell out in considerably more detail how to make the most of the language experience. As we indicated earlier, the activity does not stop at the end of the first day. We generally work with a stimulus, such as the watch, for three days. We call this the three day language experience cycle.

Day 1

1. *Presenting the Stimulus*

   The lesson begins with the presentation of a stimulus. Stimuli usually are concrete in nature, interesting to the student and related to the kindergarten curriculum. Stimuli include watches, science experiments, popular children's literature, and animals. The list of stimuli which we have used is given in the last section.

   Sometimes stimuli develop spontaneously as with the watch. Other stimuli such at the mothballs are part of the science curriculum. In other instances the children "bring in" a stimulus from their home life. While we deliberately plan to introduce certain stimuli, we always make allowances for children's immediate interests as we did with the teacher's watch.

2. *Discussion of the Stimulus*

   The teacher leads the class in a discussion of the experience, helping them to observe the characteristics of the stimulus if it is a concrete object, and then allowing them to express their thoughts on the topic. We try to avoid letting children ramble about their personal experiences which are tangential to the topic. This is an opportunity to stress sticking to the topic; it is an introduction to the concept of main idea.

   We might use this time to stress a particular skill such as categorization. We would also introduce informally any new vocabulary associated with the experience. Hopefully, students will use these words in their dictation.

3. *Dictation*

A number of children are given an opportunity to dictate sentences to the teacher who writes them with a felt marker on large lined chart paper. The paper, which can be fastened to an easel, should be placed where everyone can see it.

We are careful to repeat each word as it is written so the children begin to associate the oral word with its written form. Sometimes we read each sentence with the children after it is dictated.

Depending on the stimuli, we try to structure the sequence in a variety of ways. When time sequence is important, we might ask, "Who can tell us what happened first . . . next . . . last?" "Who can tell us how we felt about ———?"

In the first dictated accounts, we frequently include the author's name. For example, "Bobby said 'It is ticking.' " This helps children to identify at least one word in the story as their name is very meaningful to them. Later, as more words are learned, the names can be omitted.

4. *Reading the Story*

We read the story to the class, pointing to each word as we go. Then the class reads it with us. Finally, individuals may read the story with the teacher.

5. *Underlining Words*

At this point children are asked to look for words which they can identify in the story. If they think they know a word, they come up to the chart and point to it. If it is named correctly, the child may underline it. (During the first story or two, the teacher may want to do the underlining until the children understand what is expected.)

6. *Illustrating the Story*

We then allow the children to draw a picture about the stimulus. This activity may be done on Day 1 or postponed to another day in the cycle. Pictures can be drawn on regular drawing paper, in experience books, or on a duplicated copy of the story.

7. *Getting Ready for Days 2 and 3*

On individual word cards we print many of the underlined words from the story.

At this time we also use the spirit duplicator to make multiple copies of the story. There must be enough copies so that each child can take one home and place one in his experience book.

Day 2

1. *Reviewing the Story*

First, we read the story to the class, pointing to each word to develop an association between the spoken and written form and to reinforce the idea of left to right progression and return sweep. Next, we read the story with the class and then allow individual children to read the story with us.

2. *Matching, Finding and Naming Words*

At this point we hold up the word cards one at a time, and the children look for the word in the story. These cards have been prepared ahead of time and include many of the words underlined by the children on Day 1.

The children then try to name the words. If no one is successful, we begin reading the story, pointing to each word and stopping when the word in question is reached. Usually someone in the group can identify the word at this point. On subsequent days, children can play word card games in pairs and check each other's knowledge of the words.

Day 3

1. *Reviewing the Story*

Duplicated copies of the story are passed out. The review procedures of Day 2 are used, but this time each child follows his own copy.

2. *Naming Words*

On their personal copies, children are encouraged to underline words which they can identify. Later words which the children consistently identified are underlined a second time.
An alternative activity is to hold up the word cards which have been prepared previously and ask children to find and then circle these words on their copy.

3. *Follow-Up Ideas*

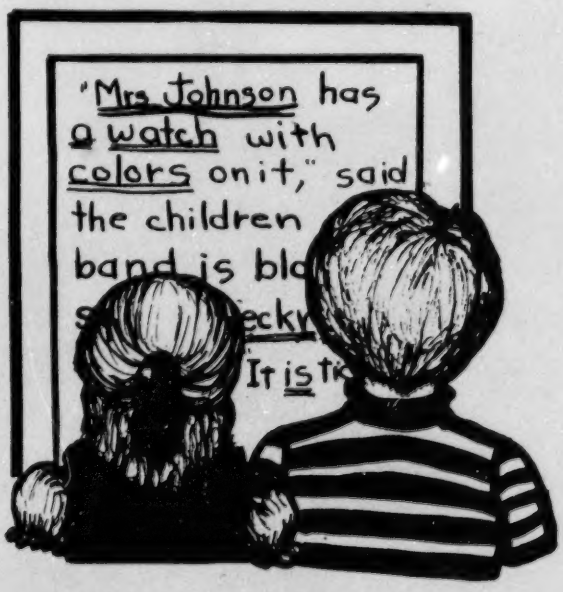
Children may take one copy home and a second copy is placed in each child's experience story booklet next to her picture.
Children are encouraged to read their stories during a free period. They work by themselves or with others or they can also point out words they know to us or to other children.

4. *Flexibility*

The sequence of activities will ordinarily follow the pattern we have described, but the three day cycle need not be used in a rigid fashion. The precise activities must be adjusted to fit the mood and pace of both the teacher and the class.

5. *Review*

If children are going to receive the maximum benefit from the stories, it is important that they be reviewed periodically.



Making Children's Individual Experience Booklets

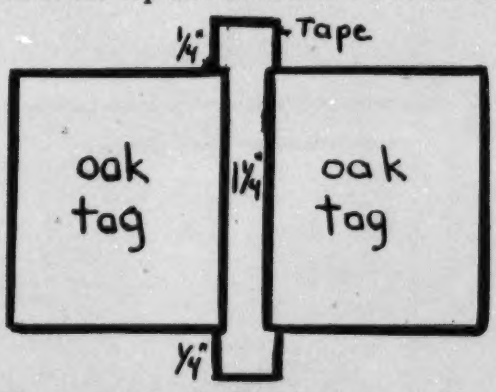
We have found it helpful to construct individual booklets in which the stories can be kept. Children enjoy paging through these stories and reading them to one another throughout the year.

Materials: To make these booklets, you will need the following:

1. Paper—newsprint, story paper, etc.
2. Oak tag
3. Carpet thread and needle
4. Rubber cement
5. Two inch wide tape

Procedure:

1. Determine the number of pages you will need. We used 12 pieces of 12 x 18 picture story paper folded in half to make 48 pages.
2. Fold the paper in half.
3. Sew the paper together on the fold. Sewing can be done on a sewing machine if thin paper has been used. When sewing by hand, cut thread four times the length of the paper. Double thread and sew in and out, making stitches 2-3 inches long. Sew from top to bottom, then reverse.
4. Construct the front and back covers. Cut a strip of tape ½ inch longer than the oak tag. We used 9 x 12" sheets. Attach the oak tag to the tape, leaving ¼ inch at the top and bottom and 1¼ inches in the middle.



5. Place the inside pages over the book's cover, making sure the fold is in the center of the tape. Fold the extra ¼ inch of tape over the oak tag.
6. Glue the first page of the booklet to the front cover and the last page to the back cover.

Optional: For variety, you may wish to cover the covers with wallpaper book samples, or you could laminate the covers before fastening them to the tape and pages.

Stimuli For Language Experience Stories

A list of possible stimuli for language experience is as extensive as the imagination of the individual teacher and her class. However, to help a newcomer get started, Barbara Cook would like to suggest some of her favorite stimuli.

Group Experience Stories:

1. Read and act out nursery rhymes, fairy tales, children's stories (trade books), songs.
2. Study an author and write about her/him.
3. Any science experiments, nature walks, seasonal changes.
4. Holidays and "What did you do on your summer/Christmas/winter/etc., vacation?"
5. Field trips.
6. Choose a topic and cut pictures from magazines related to topic.
7. Discuss any interesting picture or poster.
8. Lee Menard, our art teacher, has done an art lesson, then written an experience story.

Individual Experience Stories:

1. Discussion of feelings and emotions. What makes us happy/sad/silly/etc. How do you feel when . . . ? I had a good/bad day. Boy did I get in trouble when. "Me" experiences.
2. Children can simply be asked to draw a picture of anything they wish in their experience book, then dictate a sentence to go with it.
3. Math—draw a picture of something you have only 1 of/2 of/etc., dictate a sentence.
4. Colors—draw a picture of something that is always red/blue/etc., every time you see one, dictate a sentence.

On the following pages we will share with you some of the language experience lessons we have presented.

The topics are arranged according to subject areas although we realize full well that these divisions are somewhat arbitrary. A lesson on a roadside food market might belong under science, health, or social studies. Nevertheless, the listing does illustrate that language experience can be integrated with all areas of the kindergarten curriculum.

For each stimulus, we have kept a chart similar to the one on page 8. To conserve space, we have mentioned in this section only the skills and concepts which received special emphasis in a particular lesson.

Topic: Listening

Content Area: Literature

Stimulus: Nursery Rhymes

Stephen said, "We had a play about Jack and Jill." Chris said, "They fell down the hill." Bryan said, "They went up the hill." Bonnie said, "They went to fetch a pail of water."

What We Did

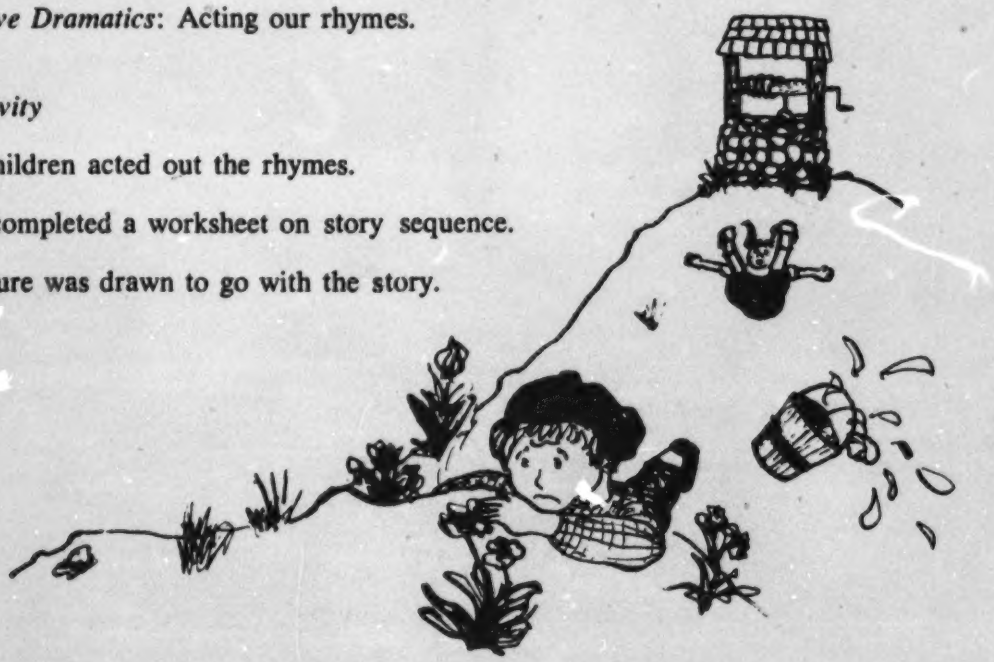
The children listened to two nursery rhymes, *Jack and Jill* and *Little Miss Muffet*. With *Jack and Jill*, the children dictated the above account. With *Little Miss Muffet*, however, they dictated the nursery rhyme verbatim to the teacher.

Skills or Concepts Emphasized

1. *Auditory Discrimination*: Listening for words that rhyme.
2. *Listening*: Attending to events in rhyme so they will know how to respond.
3. *Creative Dramatics*: Acting our rhymes.

Follow-up Activity

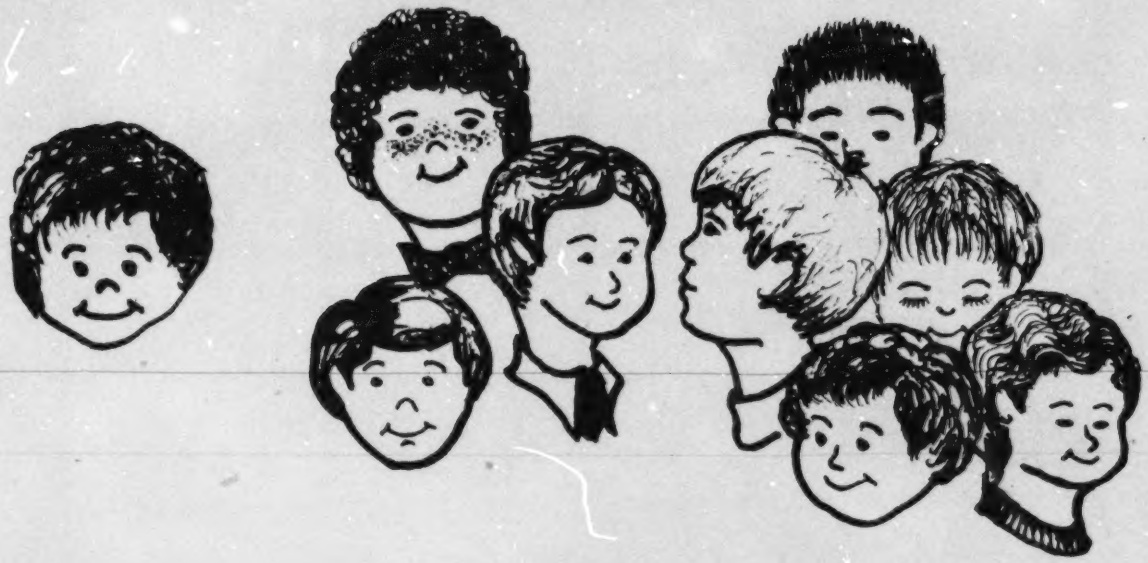
1. The children acted out the rhymes.
2. They completed a worksheet on story sequence.
3. A picture was drawn to go with the story.



Topic: Names

Content Area: Literature

Stimulus: *Too Many Daves* by Dr. Seuss (Random House, N. Y. 1961)



What We Did

The children listened to a reading of the story *Too Many Daves.*

Skills or Concepts Emphasized

1. *Auditory Discrimination*: Finding names that start with the same sound or rhyme with other names.
2. *Alphabet Knowledge*: Listing names in ABC order by first letter.
3. *Categorization*: Grouping names by boys/girls, long/short.

Follow-up Activity

1. We discussed the reason for having names.
2. A group experience story was written about names of people.
3. The children drew a picture of themselves in their individual experience books.
4. Many children decided to make lists of each other's names on their own volition. Some also wrote each other's phone number.
5. The children were given a worksheet with their classmate's name and a set of directions. (See sample on the following page)

Jamie		Patrick	Steven
Jennifer	Sandra	Laureen	
	Brian	Missy	Dawn
Erik	Maryse		Tara
Cherilyn		Geoffrey	Cheryl
Andrea	Peter	Suzanne	Jennifer

1. Find your name and put a ★ on it.
2. Find your best friend's name and put a ☺ on it.
3. Find a name that begins with A, B, C. etc...
4. Find a name with 4 letters.

Topic: Puppet Show

Content Area: Literature

Stimulus: *The Princess and the Pea, Bruce the Brute, Paddington the Bear.*

What We Did

The children watched and listened to a puppet show presented by the school librarian, Miss Pam Rosa. The presentation included the traditional favorite, *The Princess and the Pea,* a contemporary favorite, *Paddington the Bear,* and an original play written by Miss Rosa, *Bruce the Brute.*

Skills or Concepts Emphasized

1. *Auditory Memory*: Children had to remember what the various voices sounded like.
2. *Listening*: Children had to listen to be able to act out the parts of the prince, queen, etc.
3. *Auditory Discrimination*: Phonics, alphabet knowledge: *B* and *b.*

Follow-up Activity

1. The children discussed the puppet show.
2. Portions of the show were acted out by the children with their own puppets.
3. The children wrote a group experience story about the presentation.

Scott said, "Bruce the Brute eats everything that starts with B."
Roxanne said, "We gave him buttons."
We can give him balloons.

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Topic: Listening

Content Area: Literature

Stimulus: *Too Much Noise* by Ann McGovern (Houghton Mifflin, 1967)

What We Did

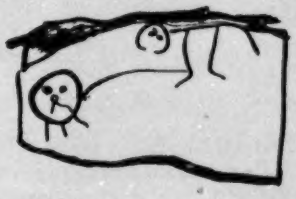
The story *Too Much Noise* was read to the class, and they acted out the story.

Skills or Concepts Emphasized

1. *Visual Discrimination*: Matching animal pictures to names.
2. *Sequence*: Acting out events in the story in proper order.
3. *Speaking*: Speaking lines in the story in a creative dramatics presentation.

Follow-up Activity

The children dictated a group experience story and drew a picture to go with the story in their personal experience book.



LAUREEN

Peter had too much noise at his house. He went to see the wise old man. The wise old man told him to get a dog, a cat, a cow, a donkey, a frog, and a hippopotamus.

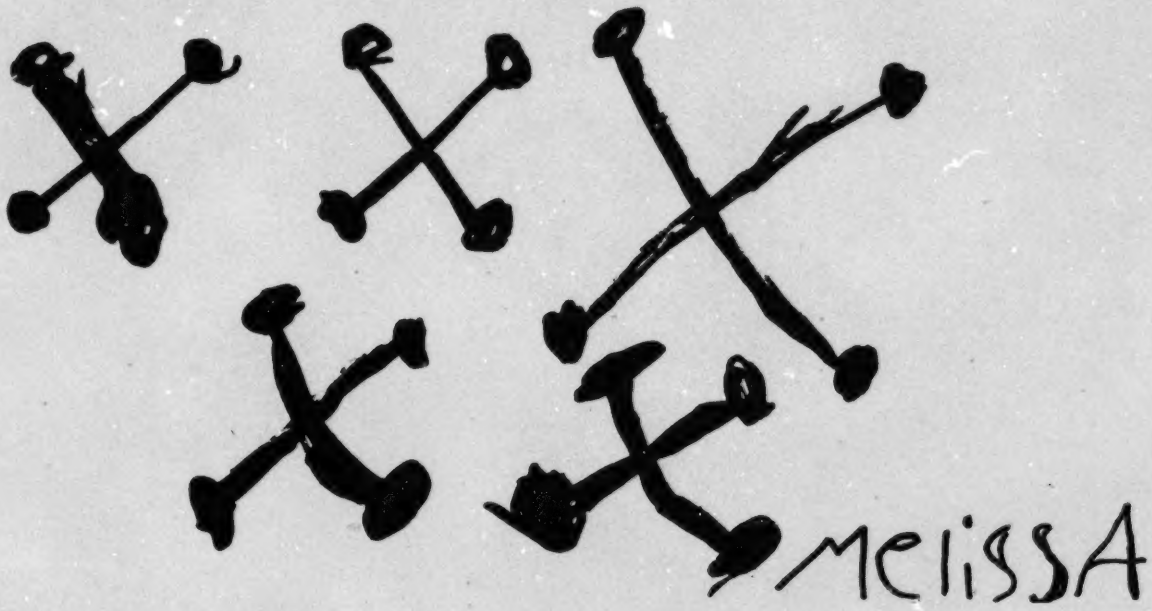
Topic: Writing Numerals

Content Area: Mathematics

Stimulus: Writing 5's

What We Did

Children arranged objects in groups of five and drew pictures about sets of 5.



Skills or Concepts Emphasized

1. *Categorization*: Grouping by 5's.
2. *Vocabulary Development*: Notion of sets.

Follow-up Activity

Children dictated a story about their picture. This was pasted in their individual experience books.

A set of five jacks.

5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5

Topic: An Experiment

Content Area: Science

Stimulus: Mothballs in a glass of soda

We put mothballs in water. The mothballs floated down to the bottom. When we put in some soda they floated up in the water. Then they came back down again.

What We Did

A glass was filled ¾ full with soda and then three mothballs were dropped into the liquid. As carbon dioxide bubbles gathered on the surface of the mothballs, the mothballs rose. When the balls reached the surface, the carbon dioxide dissolved into the air, the mothballs went down, and the effect continued with the mothballs "magically" rising and falling.

Skills or Concepts Emphasized

1. *Sequencing*: Remembering the order of events in the experiment.
2. *Comprehension*: A discussion followed as to why the mothballs went up and down. Cause and effect was stressed.
3. *Categorization*: Floating and non-floating objects.

Follow-up Activity

On the following day we led the children in a discussion on density in which floating and non-floating objects were observed.

Topic: Dinosaurs

Content Area: Science

Stimulus: Dramatic Presentation

What We Did

A group of actors from a local theatre group presented a play for children about dinosaurs in which the youngsters participated.

Skills or Concepts Emphasized

1. *Visual Discrimination* and color names: Children had to remember names for various dinosaurs according to colors.
2. *Creative Dramatics*: Children pretended to go back through a time machine to the age of dinosaurs.
3. *Vocabulary* relating to dinosaurs.

Follow-up Activity

1. A photographer took pictures for the local paper.
2. Children wrote thank you letters to the local Right to Read Director who helped arrange the presentation and to the actors themselves.
3. The children dictated a story and colored a picture about dinosaurs.

David and Mary Beth visited us. "We went on a dinosaur hunt." "We found bones," said Karen. "All the dinosaurs died," Keith said. Eric said, "We took the bones to the museum." It was fun," said all the children.

Topic: Dogs

Content Area: Science

Stimulus: Magazine Pictures

What We Did

The children cut pictures of dogs from magazines. We discussed the characteristics of dogs. We looked at photographs of the children's own pet dogs.

Skills or Concepts Emphasized

1. *Categorization*: We grouped dogs by breed, size, length of hair, and real or fanciful.
2. *Speaking*: Children shared stories about dogs with the class.
3. *Vocabulary Development*: Names of dog breeds were introduced.

Follow-up Activity

1. We wrote a group experience story.
2. Each child drew a picture about one thing mentioned in the group account and dictated a sentence about the picture.

He is eating dog food.

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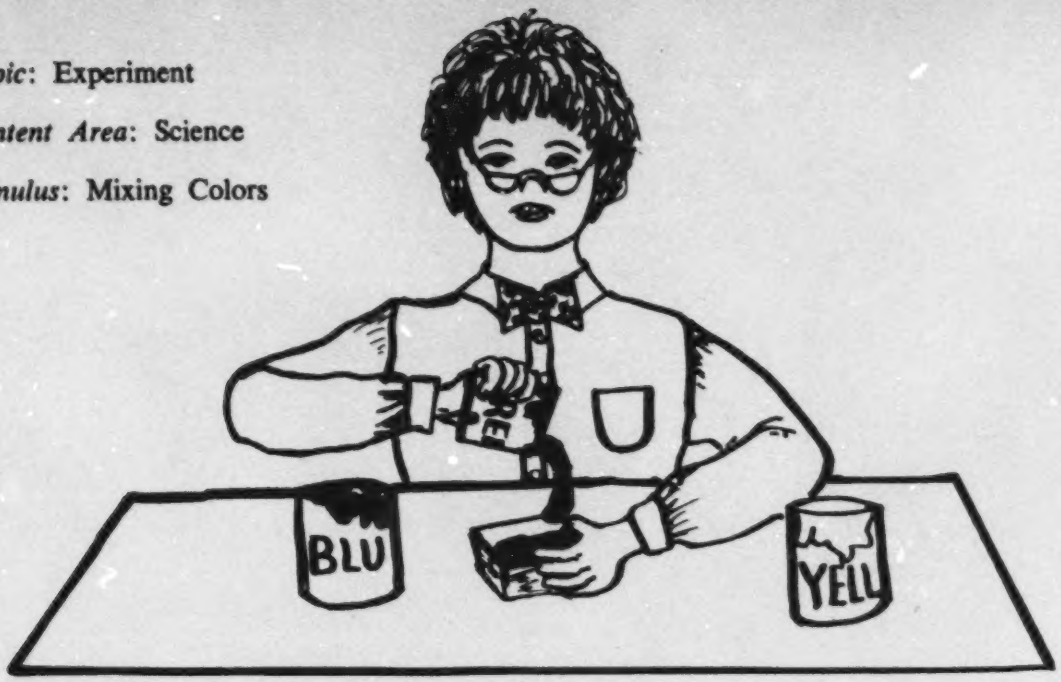
Topic: Experiment

Content Area: Science

Stimulus: Mixing Colors



What We Did

We showed children how mixing two colors could produce a third color, e.g. blue and red yields purple, red and yellow yields orange, yellow and blue yields green.

Skills or Concepts Emphasized

1. *Visual Discrimination*: Watching colors turn into other colors.
2. *Categorization*: Colors
3. *Vocabulary*: Matching colors with color words.

Follow-up Activity

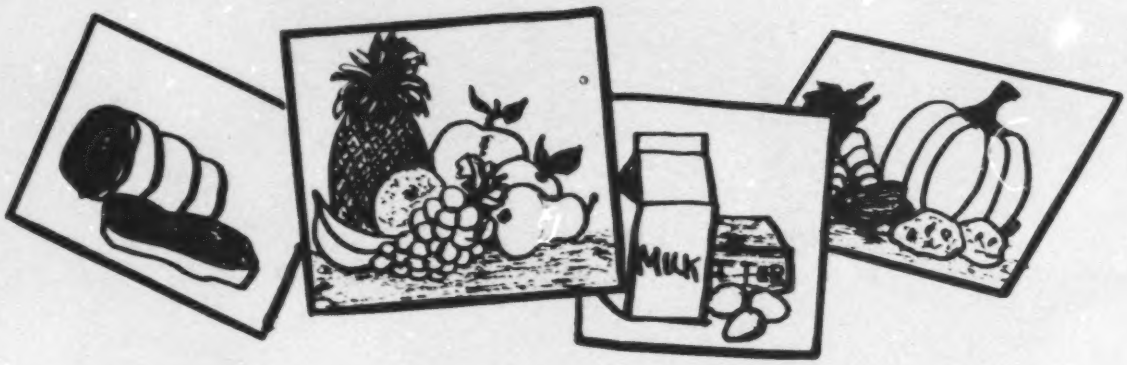
We discussed the experience with the children, had them dictate a group experience story and then recorded the experiment in individual experience books.

Geoff said, "We put a color in the ashtray." Steven said, "We put another color in." Peter said, "It turned to a different color." Missy said, "We made a orange color, purple and green."

Topic: Foods

Content Area: Health

Stimulus: Magazine pictures of food



What We Did

Children cut pictures of food from magazines and newspapers. The four basic food groups were discussed.

Skills or Concepts Emphasized

1. *Categorization*: Four food groups.
2. *Visual Discrimination*: Looking for various foods.
3. *Vocabulay Development*: Learning names of foods.

Follow-up Activity

1. A bulletin board was divided into four sections with a key food in each section. Children placed their own pictures in the correct section.
2. A separate chart was prepared for food we like but which has little food value.
3. Children dictated a story about the food group and drew their own food pictures.

Food is good for us. We should eat fruit, meat, cereal and milk every-day. Too much candy or sweet things are not good for us.

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Topic: Roadside Food Stand

Content Area: Social Studies/Science/Health

Stimulus: Poster

What We Did

A poster of a roadside stand was presented and the children discussed it with the teacher.

Skills or Concepts Emphasized

1. *Categorization*: Grouping the various types of food available at the stand.
2. *Concepts*: Understanding the nature of food sold at a roadside stand and why.

Follow-up Activity

Children wrote a group experience story about the picture, put a copy of the story in individual experience books, and colored a picture of a roadside stand.

Maryse said, "A girl buying some food." Sandra said, "The farmer was selling his food."

Topic: Songs

Content Area: Music

Stimulus: *A Hunting We Will Go*
(A thank you to John Langstaff of The University of Connecticut for this idea)

What We Did

We taught the children to sing the song *A Hunting We Will Go.*

Skills or Concepts Emphasized

1. *Visual Discrimination*: Children matched words on a duplicated sheet with words in the story.
2. *Auditory Discrimination*: Children memorized words in the song.

Follow-up Activity

1. Different rhyming words were substituted in the song each time e.g., We'll catch a ——— and put him in a ———.
2. The children dictated a group story but blank spaces were left for the rhyming words. Later a picture was drawn in the individual experience books with children suggesting words for the blank spaces.

Oh a hunting we willgo. A hunting we will go.
We'll catch a fish and put him in a dish and
then we'll let him go.

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About Sweeney Kindergarten

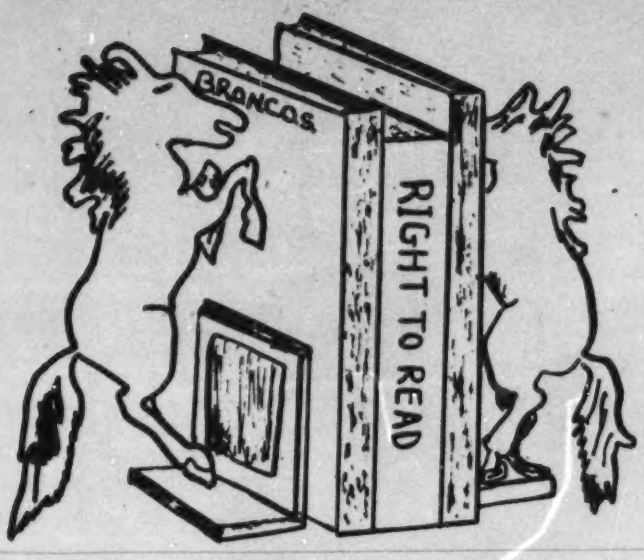
The Joseph C. Sweeney Kindergarten is located in Pascoag, Rhode Island, a rural community in the northwest corner of the state. It is a "Little Red Schoolhouse" with two large rooms, four sessions of kindergarten, and two teachers.

The school was built in the 1800's and is almost a hundred years old. It originally housed grades 1-4, was closed for a year or two, and then reopened in 1970 as a kindergarten. The children who attend come from all sections of the town and represent a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

For many years the language experience approach to reading readiness has been encouraged here. With the support of the BRONCOS Reading Improvement Program and with the assistance of Dr. William Oehlkers, we further developed and polished specific techniques for using language experience stories.

We hope this booklet will help teachers realize that all phases of readiness may be taught through the language experience approach. We do not feel possessive of our ideas, so hopefully you will give them a try.

Barbara Cook and Marilyn Johnson



Burrillville Right To Read

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